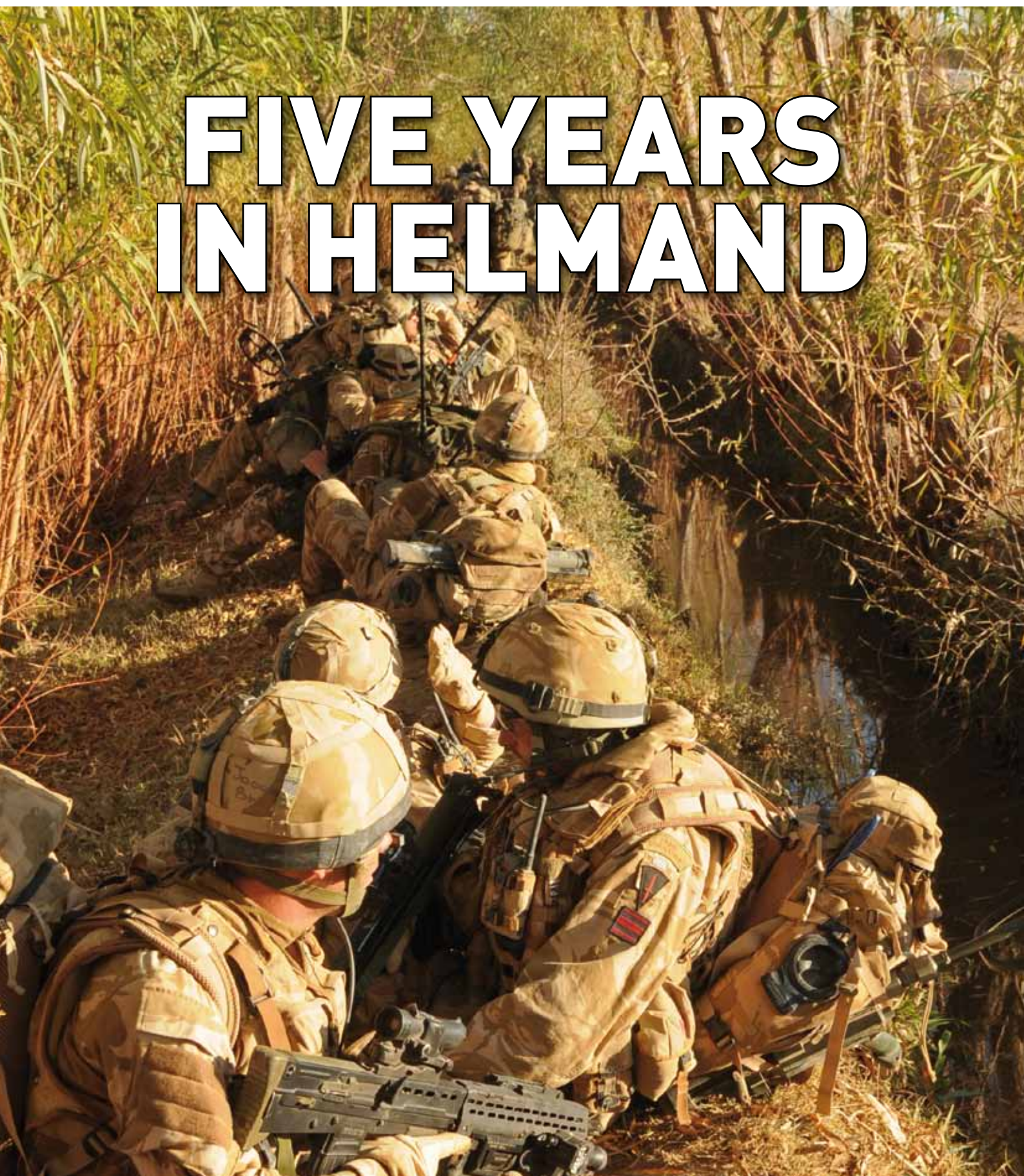


PRIME TIME: SOLDIERS DISCUSS MAKING BBC DOCUMENTARY

Defence**Focus**

Royal Navy | Army | Royal Air Force | Ministry of Defence | ISSUE #252 JUNE/11

FIVE YEARS IN HELMAND



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NAVIGATOR



Regulars

P5 IN MEMORIAM

Tributes to the fallen

P18 VERBATIM

MOD spokesman General Lorimer

P14 PODIUM

Legacy of bin Laden's death



Exclusives

P8 FIVE YEARS IN HELMAND

The story of UK operations

P12 APACHES

Apaches remain strong in Helmand

P16 WAR ON WIDESCREEN

Combat through a soldier's eyes

P26 CHANGING PLACES

Civilian Jenna Clare's Afghan deployment

Lifestyle

P24 BOYS' TOYS

GSM W01 Bill Mott voices action figure

P28 HEALTH MATTERS

Living with diabetes

P31 GRAND DESIGNS

Win a stay at London's Grand Hotel



EDITOR'S NOTE

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DANNY CHAPMAN

Is it me or do things seem a bit quieter than normal? Of course announcements seem to be like buses, no big ones for a while, then three or four come along at once, then it all goes quiet again.

In this week that we are going to print we've announced the Armed Forces Covenant is to be enshrined in law, the end of operations in Iraq and the approval of the early design phase for a successor submarine to Trident. All heady stuff which we have covered online.

Apart from these though, recent weeks have seemed quiet in terms of big events. Even William Hague said this week in the Government's monthly update on Afghanistan that insurgent activity in Helmand is low at the moment. Is it all over now bin Laden is gone?

Now just when you start to think we have had our feet up here at the heart of the MOD's communications network, hold on to your horses.

We are in fact all the busier tracking down more everyday, but nonetheless important and interesting stories about what's going on.

These have included online stories about heroic acts on operations being recognised, units returning from Helmand, ships departing for far off seas and the daily actions being taken by the RAF and Navy against Gaddafi's regime in Libya.

Of course bin Laden's demise probably doesn't make an awful lot of difference as our Podium piece in this issue suggests, and our cover feature which reflects on the five years UK forces have been in Helmand summarises what has been achieved. And of course there is still a lot left to do there.

So despite a lull in major announcements, there is still loads to do and plenty to talk about. Better get my feet off the table then.

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IN MEMORIAM

DEATHS ON OPERATIONS – 15 APRIL 2011 TO 19 MAY 2011



Captain Lisa Head

Captain Lisa Head, from 321 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron, 11 EOD Regiment RLC, died on 19 April 2011 in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, of wounds received in Afghanistan. Captain Head was severely injured while dealing with an IED and was taken to the military hospital in Camp Bastion. There, surgeons stabilised her sufficiently to allow her medical evacuation

to the UK where she succumbed to her injuries. Captain Head, aged 29, was from Huddersfield. She was commissioned into the Royal Logistic Corps and initially trained as an Air Transport Liaison Officer, deploying to Iraq in 2006 and Afghanistan in 2007. She was selected to attend the Ammunition Technical Officer's course, and was posted to 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment RLC. She served with distinction as an ATO in Northern Ireland with

321 EOD Squadron and after completing the High-Threat Course as an IEDD (Neutralise) Operator she joined the C-IED Task Force for Op HERRICK 14. Captain Head was an exemplary member of the Joint Force EOD Group within the C-IED Task Force. She was a popular and respected member of her parent regiment and squadron. A gifted troop commander, she had earned the respect of all ranks and had a bright future ahead of her.



Warrant Officer Class 2 Graham Bean

Warrant Officer Class 2 Graham Bean, from 73 Engineer Regiment (Volunteers), attached to the 3 Royal Anglian Group, died while serving in Cyprus on Operation TOSCA on Tuesday 3 May 2011. WO2 Bean died after taking part in a mountain biking activity during which he was taken ill, while serving with the United Nations Peacekeeping Force (UNFICYP) based in Nicosia.

Employed in the high profile post of VIP visit coordinator, WO2 Bean was known by many and his sudden passing has been deeply felt across the UNFICYP. WO2 Bean, aged 54 from West Yorkshire, joined the Territorial Army in May 1975 as a Sapper in 75 Engineer Regiment and transferred to 73 Engineer Regiment based in Nottingham. His natural style and flair led to swift promotion to Lance Corporal and by 1996 he had achieved Warrant Officer

rank. He served on operations in Bosnia and Iraq prior to deploying to Cyprus on Operation TOSCA. A highly professional and able soldier, it was WO2 Bean's personal qualities that really set him apart; loyal, diligent and with a real zest for life, he provided an outstanding example of everything a soldier should be. He leaves behind his three children David, 28, Hazel, 26, and Nicola, 17, with David currently preparing to deploy with the British Army to Afghanistan.

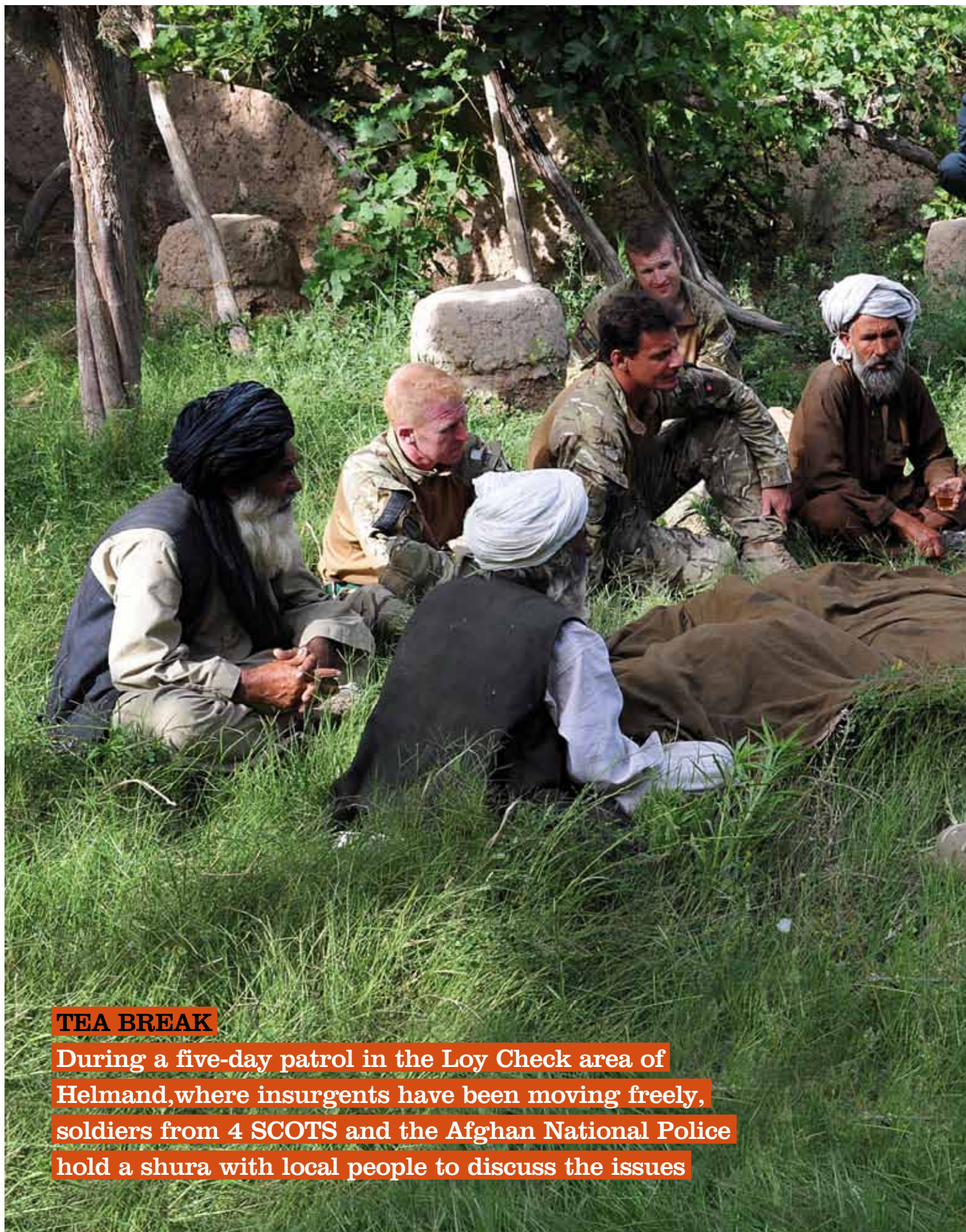


Marine Nigel Dean Mead

Marine Nigel Dean Mead, from Lima Company, 42 Commando Royal Marines, Combined Force Nad 'Ali (North), was killed in Afghanistan on Sunday 15 May 2011 as a result of wounds received during an IED blast. Lima Company was conducting a cordon and search operation, partnered with the Afghan National Security Forces, of compounds suspected

of being associated with improvised explosive device facilitation in the Loy Mandeh wadi in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand province. Once in the compounds of interest, Marine Mead was fatally injured in an IED blast. Marine Mead, aged 19, lived with his mother, Amanda, and sister in Carmarthen. He joined the Royal Marines on 27 October 2008, aged 17 and passed fit for duty as a Royal Marines Commando on 3 July 2009, as an original member of 977 Troop. He was the

youngest marine to pass out from his troop. On completion of training he joined 8 Troop, Lima Company, 42 Commando, based in Plymouth. He was involved in a number of high tempo and demanding tactical training exercises, including a two-month amphibious deployment to the United States. He also enjoyed wider training activities such as mountain training. Marine Mead loved his friends and family and thoroughly enjoyed his time in the Royal Marines.



TEA BREAK

During a five-day patrol in the Loy Check area of Helmand, where insurgents have been moving freely, soldiers from 4 SCOTS and the Afghan National Police hold a shura with local people to discuss the issues



HELMAND

FIVE YEARS ON

HALF-A-DECADE IN HELMAND. HOW WE GOT HERE

THIS YEAR marks the fifth anniversary of when nearly 3,500 British troops deployed to Helmand province. This was stage three of NATO's plan to bring security to Afghanistan by expanding ISAF's influence into the south of the country.

This meant that ISAF subsumed coalition forces that were already operating in Helmand. The deployment was consistent with the UK's strategic plan for Afghanistan which argued for a single command and control authority which would establish a coherent, multinational approach in the province. And as a leading member of ISAF and NATO, it was important for the UK to show its commitment to the mission.

The objective was to extend government control

in areas where the Taliban had held sway. This would be achieved by working jointly with Afghan institutions, FCO and DFID to create provisional reconstruction teams which would establish development zones, which in time would spread outwards across Helmand, like ink on blotting paper.

Famously, in April, the then Defence Secretary, John Reid, said, "We're in the south to help and protect the Afghan people to reconstruct their economy and democracy. We would be perfectly happy to leave again in three years' time without firing one shot."

Many misinterpreted this as meaning there was an expectation, or hope, that we would leave without having fired a shot. In fact the quote was intended to

OPERATIONS IN HELMAND

Prelim Ops Camp Bastion 2005

Today, Camp Bastion is home to more than 20,000 personnel, with all the facilities that you would expect to see on a major base. But in 2005 it was just a patch of sand with a few tents, and air conditioning a distant dream. In 2007 engineering construction of the runway and Tier 2 hospital was underway.



Op Lastay Kulang June 2007

Operation Lastay Kulang (Pashto for pickaxe handle) was a British-led NATO offensive with 2,000 ISAF and Afghan National Army troops taking part. The aim was to remove a Taliban force whose presence threatened the security and stability of the Lower Sangin Valley.



Op Snakebite December 2007

Operation Snakebite involved US, Afghan National Army and UK troops retaking Musa Qal'ah which had fallen back to the Taliban. The intention was to expand the security footprint so that a government presence could re-establish itself, which it did, but never far from the district centre.



Op Eagles Summit August 2008

Operation Eagles Summit was conducted by ISAF and Afghan National Army troops who transported a 220-tonne turbine to Kajaki through Taliban-controlled territory. It was said to have been one of the largest logistical operations carried out by the British Army since the Second World War.





reinforce the position that the UK troops' goal was to protect governance and development activities as opposed to taking deliberate kinetic actions. In fact the fighting faced by 16 Air Assault Brigade in 2006 was ferocious, and by the end of the year, troop numbers had been doubled. Today there are 130,000 ISAF troops in Afghanistan, of which the UK's enduring contribution is well over 9,000.

The quality of equipment supplied to the Armed Forces began to attract much criticism, especially as the insurgents turned to improvised explosive devices as their weapon of choice and in-service vehicles at

the time were not capable of meeting the new threat.

The need for more armoured transport was especially recognised. Through the Urgent Operational Requirement (UOR) process, nearly £2bn was spent providing protected mobility vehicles such as the Mastiff and Ridgback. Between 2006 – 07 the UK government spent £700m in Afghanistan. Three years later that had risen to more than £3.7bn on top of the defence budget. As of February 2011 more than £4.8bn has been approved for equipment through UOR.

As well as a need for extra resources, including fast jets and attack helicopters, it later called for a change in tactics, including a permanent presence to protect Sangin and other key population centres. The decision was taken to deploy UK forces to Sangin, Musa Qal'ah and Now Zad. Combat outposts, known as platoon houses, were established and soon gained a reputation as being significantly important.

Although the platoon houses did frustrate the insurgents' attempts to threaten the development zone, it came at a high military risk, and may have produced a negative feeling among locals who found themselves closer to the fighting. In Musa Qal'ah, for example the Paras were pinned down by insurgents for 52 days. General Richards, the ISAF commander at the time said, "Clearly the immediate vicinities of the platoon houses became areas where the average civilian with any sense left and his home was destroyed."

In October 2006, to demonstrate the reach of his authority, Governor Daud reached an agreement with the tribal elders of Musa Qal'ah, establishing an exclusion zone around the town that ISAF troops would not enter; in return the elders would deny the Taliban access. The agreement lasted less than four months.

Operation Sond Chara October 2008

Op Sond Chara (Red Dagger) was centred around four Taliban strongholds near the town of Nad 'Ali. The purpose was to make safe the area around the capital of Helmand, Lashkar Gah, and to help establish a secure area for a planned voter registration programme.



Op Panther's Claw June 2009

The aim of operation Panther's Claw, also known as Panchai Palang, was to protect the provincial capital by clearing the area known as Babaji between Gereshk and Lashkar Gah thereby creating a permanent security presence and allowing governance to develop.



Op Moshtarak February 2010

Operation Moshtarak (Together) Phase 1 improved the security in and around Kandahar easing freedom of movement. Phase 2 improved security between Marjah and Maiwand in the east and from Gereshk to Garmsir. Phase 3 focussed on the expansion and consolidation of Phase 1.



Op Omid Char October 2010

Operation Omid Char (Hope Four) was completely devised and led by forces from the 3rd Brigade of 215 Maiwand Corps of the Afghan National Army who had been mentored by British troops. The aim was to secure a key area near Gereshk in Nahr-e Saraj district and restrict Taliban movement.



Over the next year expansion of ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) established a security footprint that allowed the re-establishment of a government presence in both Sangin and Musa Qal'ah, but the reach didn't extend beyond a few kilometres from the district centres.

In 2008, despite showing early promise in terms of comparative stability, Lashkar Gah came under ferocious attack by a Taliban force in excess of 300. Although successfully disrupted, that attack highlighted the vulnerability of central Helmand. Shortly after his election in 2009, US President Obama approved the deployment to southern Afghanistan of an additional 17,000 troops, and a month later he boosted this by a further 4,000, specifically to train the ANSF.

And then came the appointment of General McChrystal who conducted his own review of the situation, describing it as "serious and deteriorating," and as a result argued for a new approach.

His four main pillars were: improved partnering with the ANSF, prioritising responsible and accountable governance, gaining the initiative thereby reversing the insurgents' momentum, and focussing resources where the population was most threatened. The new approach called for proper resourcing and depended on an integrated civilian-military counter-insurgency (COIN) campaign earning the Afghan people's support by providing a safe environment. The strategy resulted in a further force level increase of 30,000 more US personnel and an extra uplift of around 10,000 other ISAF troops targeted at the

southern provinces of Kandahar and Helmand.

This surge meant that a redistribution of manpower in line with COIN principles was possible. As US numbers increased, so they assumed responsibility from the UK for northern and southern Helmand, ultimately taking over in Musa Qal'ah, Kajaki and Sangin. At the end of this process, UK troops were consolidated in three central districts, Lashkar Gah, Nad 'Ali and Nahr-e Saraj, which contain about 30 per cent of the total population and the main economic centres.

Throughout the campaign, the cost has been high, with 365 British troops having sacrificed their lives at the time of writing. Yet real progress has been made. Some things that were inconceivable five years ago are now happening in Helmand.

The strength and spread of the insurgency has been challenged; often in areas that were previously insurgent strongholds, the Afghan government is now in control. The ANSF strength and quality has grown significantly. They are beginning to take responsibility for security and have been involved in high profile operations. As a result, economic and social development are beginning to burgeon.

Between now and 2015, NATO and the Afghan government have agreed that responsibility for security in provinces and districts will transition to total Afghan control. After that, UK forces will no longer be in a combat role, or be present in the same sort of numbers as now. But the relationships forged in the heat of battle in Afghanistan will stay strong, based on trade, diplomacy and development and helping to build the Afghan forces for the future. **DF**



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APACHE IN AFGHANISTAN

FIVE YEARS ON AND APACHE'S STILL GOING STRONG. REPORT BY LEIGH HAMILTON

After five years of operating in Afghanistan, the Army's attack helicopter Apache continues to provide ISAF forces with an invaluable operational capability in theatre.

The Boeing AH-64 Apache was originally developed as the US Army's Advanced Attack Helicopter to hunt and destroy tanks.

But with its 30-millimetre (1.2 in) M230 Chain Gun and four hardpoints mounted on stub-wing pylons, typically carrying a mixture of AGM-114 Hellfire missiles and CRV7 rocket pods, the helicopter has proven itself very handy to the British Army in Helmand.

The Apache continues to prove its versatility and remains the platform of choice for the soldiers on the ground when they request fire support. It is a multi-role aircraft providing close combat attack, ISTAR, escort and support to other operations.

Operated by the Army Air Corps the Apache AH Mark One fleet consists of 67 aircraft, a number of which are deployed successfully in Afghanistan in support of UK and coalition forces.

In many cases the mere sight of the Apache at the scene of a contact is enough to see the enemy make a quick and quiet retreat.

The most sophisticated weapon system currently in service with the British Army, the Apache AH Mk 1 carries a fire-control radar and radar frequency interferometer (a passive radar receiving device) providing an integrated surveillance and attack system.

The attack helicopter can operate in all weathers, day or night, and detect, classify and prioritise up to 256 potential targets in a matter of seconds. **DF**

The M230 chain gun fires 30mm linkless ammunition

The Longbow radar above the rotors allows the Apache to hover behind cover while scanning for targets

A crew of two people occupy the tandem cockpit

The Apache is fitted with 76 2.75 inch air-to-ground rockets



APACHE FACTS

- In-Service Date: 2001
- Maximum all up mass: 7,746kg
- Engines: 2 x 850 shp Rolls-Royce RTM-322
- Crew: 2
- Length: 17.57m
- Main rotor diameter: 14.63m
- Height: 4.9m
- Maximum Speed: 330 kph
- Range: 475 km
- Armament: 16 x Hellfire missiles, 76 x 2.75 inch CRV x 7 rockets, 1,200 x 30mm cannon rounds, 4 x air-to-air missiles



Prince Harry, who recently qualified as a helicopter pilot in the Army, has passed a stringent 10-month course to fly the Apache helicopter and continues to learn how to operate the aircraft's weaponry.

WHAT IS THE LEGACY OF BIN LADEN'S DEATH?

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT BIN LADEN'S DEATH IS CLOSURE IN PART ONE OF THE BATTLE AGAINST AL-QAEDA. BUT HIS SUPPORTERS WILL REGROUP AND OPEN THE NEXT CHAPTER

By Tobias Feakin,
Director, National
Security and
Resilience, RUSI

There is no doubt that with the death of Al-Qaeda's figurehead, an element of their potency and influence will be lost.

During the past 15 years Osama bin Laden was the key persona, spokesman, and visual embodiment of Al-Qaeda. Through his messages on TV and on the internet, he expounded the ideology that was developed by himself and Ayman al-Zawahiri, promoting the global jihad. A vital element of this ideology was to move Al-Qaeda from being a physical group of individuals geographically constrained, into an evolving ideology which could inspire others to take up arms against the West and strike out globally. Bin Laden realised that this shift to becoming a movement was the key to the success of Al-Qaeda's long-term goals.

Prior to the 9/11 attacks the Al-Qaeda core was pivotal to the strength of the organisation, around a dozen or so members of the inner circle surrounded by around 100 extremely motivated loyalists drawn

from around the Muslim world. Below bin Laden was his deputy Abu Ayoub al-Iraqi otherwise known as Mamdouth Salim, and underneath him were the consultative committee drawn from Mujahedeen who fought in the Soviet-Afghan war in the 1970s/80s who had sworn a pledge of allegiance to bin Laden in 1989.

FEROCIOUS NATURE

Since their forced withdrawal from Afghanistan the core leadership hid itself away within the tribal regions of Waziristan, scattered over both the Pakistani and Afghan sides of the border. Due to the ferocious nature of the allied forces' pursuit, the core of Al-Qaeda became increasingly small in numbers, yet retained an incredibly tight-knit structure. Despite the denial of territorial space for Al-Qaeda by increased NATO operations in Afghanistan since 2005, the small number of operatives had been strengthened somewhat by the relationships it had formed with Pashtun extremists and separatist groups that live in the border regions.

Thousands of Arab jihadis had made their homes in this region, with many marrying the Pashtun widows of Taliban fighters, which ensures their continued protection and the loyalty of the local tribes. And this is where it was assumed for many years that bin Laden was hiding, so it came as a surprise to many that he was discovered in a secure house less than a mile from Pakistan's main military academy in Abbottabad.

And this raises a serious question mark over the potential involvement of Pakistani military and intelligence services in bin Laden's hideout.

Even though Zardari's administration had ramped up their efforts to counter the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, the influence of the Pakistani intelligence services, the ISI, is still undeniably strong. Within the ISI there remains a reluctance from some members to fight what they see as fellow Muslims. The ISI have traditionally been blamed for a great deal of support for violent Islamic groups in its fractious relationship with India:

CHANGING SHAPE OF AL-QAEDA

Throughout the 2000s Al-Qaeda's global presence and impact dramatically widened as the organisation transformed into a network of loosely affiliated franchises operating more or less independently of a leadership on the run.



Al-Qaeda's ideology, long-term strategy, training materials and justification of jihad are freely available on the internet, enabling any independent cell or group to operate within its framework. There is no longer as much of a reliance on a centralised base, which was enjoyed in Afghanistan, and few of the terrorists have any form of personal contact with the inner core.

Bin Laden's final hideout exemplified the difficulty he was having in providing the messages to those he wished to influence; the building was cut off from modern communications technology, no telephones, and no internet connection, the only communication being his small number of messengers who would carry messages to the outside world. This ended up being his downfall, as intelligence agencies had managed to infiltrate this network and extract enough information to form a picture upon which to act.

Over the past three years we have seen the diminishing influence that he has had on Al-Qaeda operations, but the movement which he inspired has spread to new centres of focus, sprouting new franchises in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.


Most prominent of these countries has been the Yemen where the growing influence of the charismatic

“ The long-term aims of Al-Qaeda remain despite bin Laden's demise ”

preacher Anwar al-Awlaki and Al-Qaeda has caused growing concern to international governments. Attacks from 2009 onwards in both the UK, Europe and across the US have all demonstrated the influence that al-Awlaki and his group now have on taking the global jihad into the 2010s, more so than the Al-Qaeda core.

The long-term aims of Al-Qaeda remain despite bin Laden's demise, and his influence as a martyr will continue to grow in the months and years to come as will the glorification of his death by both sides.

There is no doubting that the death of bin Laden is the closure of the first chapter of the story of and battle against Al-Qaeda, and that this will undoubtedly slow the momentum of the organisation. This is something that should be greeted happily as a partial victory in the ongoing struggle against international terrorism.

However, the ideological message and influence of bin Laden has clearly been globally dispersed and the weeks and months ahead will demonstrate how the various factions and offshoots of Al-Qaeda will regroup, and ultimately react to the death of bin Laden and open the next chapter of the story. 

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RN Association: Comradeship for all serving and ex-service members of the RN, RM, QARNNS, WRNS, Reserves, RFA and RNXS. www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

Royal Marines Benevolent Fund: Relieves hardship among serving and former Marines and dependents. www.royalmarines.charities@charity.vfree.com or call 02392 547201.

ABF The Soldiers Charity: Support to soldiers and veterans. www.soldierscharity.org or call 0845 241 4820.

RAF Benevolent Fund: Help for RAF personnel past and present. www.rafbf.org or call 0800 1692942.

Civil Service Benevolent Fund: Helps anyone who has worked for the Civil Service and their dependents. Advice about support and financial help. www.csbf.org.uk or call 0800 056 2424.

Army Welfare Service: HQ AWS has relocated to Upavon. Confidential support for soldiers and families. www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/family/default.aspx or call (UK) 01980 615975.

RAF Association (RAFA): Comradeship and care for current and former RAF members. www.rafa.org.uk/welfare.asp.

HIVE: Tri-Service information covering issues like education and health. 167 offices. www.hive.mod.uk.

Royal British Legion: Charity providing financial, social and emotional support to vets and serving, and dependents. www.britishlegion.org.uk or call 08457 725 725.

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Our War - 10 years in Afghanistan - is due to air on BBC3 in June. Executives claim it will offer viewers, for the first time, the chance to see as close as possible front line action through a soldier's eyes.

The programmes are mainly based on video footage gathered via personal cameras that have been fixed on the helmets of British soldiers who have deployed to Helmand in the last 10 years.

There are three 60-minute episodes in the series, each one looking at a specific time in Helmand over the last 10 years, with key sequences made up from the helmet-mounted cameras.

The eyes we see the front line through include those of Colour Sergeant Adam Swift MC and Colour Sergeant Paul Baines MC from 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards and Colour Sergeant Simon Panter MC from 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment.

They had all decided to fit cameras to their helmets to gather their own video footage for themselves. But once the BBC learned that this footage existed, the soldiers were keen to help make the programmes and offer their unique view of the combat mission in Afghanistan.

Colour Sergeant Panter appears in the first episode of the series which will air on 7 June 2011. His footage is from his time as a Platoon Sergeant in A Company on Op HERRICK 6 in 2007. Although welcoming the opportunity to be involved in the series, he was unprepared for just how emotional the experience would be.

In the programme, viewers see what Colour Sergeant Panter saw as he attempted to save the life of Private Chris Gray, who, aged 19, sadly died as a result of a fire fight with the Taliban.

"It was quite tough to watch it back," Colour Sergeant Panter said. "Some of the footage I hadn't watched since I shot it. One of my soldiers died and I'm dealing with trying to save his life on camera. It's not good when that happens to one of your blokes. It was very emotional and tough to watch it again."

Colour Sergeant Swift, whose footage is from HERRICK 4 in 2006, also found reliving the extreme experiences he faced in theatre a bit unnerving.

"I forgot the feeling of the anticipation of the fight and how surreal it was," he said. "It's weird so far down the line to be talking about it again although my time in Afghanistan has been such a

big part of my life."

Our War Executive Producer Colin Barr believes that the programme's emotion and gritty realism will change the way that the British public views the mission in Afghanistan.

He said: "Meeting soldiers who were involved in every period of the mission in Afghanistan and using their own footage is pretty unprecedented and the MOD has given us overwhelming support."

"The programme is extremely powerful. When you watch the footage, you feel like you end up somewhere completely different than you were expecting. It feels like it belongs to the soldiers who took part in it and it takes the viewer somewhere they've probably never been before."

"This programme makes you see war in a way you haven't seen before."

Colour Sergeant Panter agrees. "The public is basically seeing what a soldier goes through and what the soldier's thoughts are about it, as opposed to seeing them in the correct military posture and answering questions in the right way. This is a bit more personal."

"I think the British public knows roughly what goes on through the media,

Through a soldier's eyes

A NEW BBC SERIES ABOUT BRITISH SOLDIERS' EXPERIENCES IN HELMAND WILL CHANGE THE WAY PEOPLE THINK ABOUT AFGHANISTAN. LEIGH HAMILTON REPORTS.

but this is really the first time that they can see it through a soldier's eyes."

Colour Sergeant Swift added: "It would be interesting to speak to somebody who hasn't been there, to see if they get the same feeling that I do when I watch it. When I watched it, my heart was going again and I was feeling the anticipation again before the fight. I think the programme gives that feeling off really well."

In addition to the soldiers' own headcam footage, all three are interviewed and given the opportunity to explain in their own words how their Afghanistan deployments affected them.

Colin Barr said: "Without exception, I was blown away by the military personnel we worked with on this programme. I was surprised about how self-aware they are and that they were so happy to debunk stuff that the general public normally hear about squaddies.

"Their perspective on things was one that you rarely hear. They were utterly candid and the interviews felt very intimate. They were really, really impressive."

The soldiers' footage is being seen by some as a historical record of 10 years of



Pictures courtesy of the BBC

a fierce war which many men and women have paid the ultimate price for.

"This is an amazing, incredible record to have," concluded Colin Barr. "It's being created every day and we have a snapshot of it. I feel like we're creating an anthology of the Afghanistan missions

and we're hoping to do something further with this material.

"No war has been covered like this and we have to return to it. This is a living archive. I think this programme will change the way people think about Afghanistan." **DF**

“ It feels like this belongs to the soldiers ”



On the ground: Soldiers from 1 Royal Anglian in Helmand

ALIGNING WORDS AND DEEDS

AS HE PREPARES TO LEAVE POST, OUTGOING STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OFFICER, MAJOR GENERAL JOHN LORIMER, TALKS TO IAN CARR



DF: What does the role of Strategic Communication Officer for CDS involve?

JL: It encompasses a number of things. I am the MOD's principal media spokesman on operations, including Afghanistan, Libya and Iraq. If the MOD requires someone to talk about current operations, nine times out of ten, it's me. I engage with various organisations interested in defence, such as universities and academic institutions, think tanks, community groups, parliamentarians; I also represent the MOD at cross-departmental media briefings. I have a second role which involves increasing our collective understanding of strategic communication. We have recently published a Joint Doctrine Note (JDN 1/11) in which strategic communication is defined as: 'advancing national interests by using all defence means of communication to influence the attitudes and behaviour of people'. We now need to drive this forward and improve how we do it.

DF: What do you mean by strategic communication?

JL: This is important: strategic communication is all about aligning words and deeds. It is more than just

engaging with the media, although clearly that is important. It is about Information Operations (IO); key leadership engagement and visits; single Service PR; internal communication; online engagement via blogs, Facebook and Twitter; responses to FOI requests and more. But, the most powerful form of communication is what we do - our actions. Strategic communication is also something we all must understand and do; from the most senior to the most junior, military and civilian. Communicating our messages is not just the responsibility of people who have the words 'media' or 'communication' in their job title. It's everyone's responsibility: 'a game for all the family'.

DF: How good are we at it?

JL: We need to get much better; strategic communication needs to be in our blood, part of our DNA. For us to improve, we need to change our structures, processes and mindset; not just in the MOD, but in all government departments.

Picture: Cpl Jon Bevan RLC



Ground truth: in his previous role as Commander Task Force Helmand, the then Brigadier John Lorimer waits for a Chinook to land in the Upper Gereshk Valley at FOB Arnhem

DF: So what do we need to change?

JL: The Joint Doctrine Note on strategic communication has been well received and it has started the debate in the MOD and Armed Forces. In it, we have outlined the principles: strategic communication has to be policy-driven, integral to strategy formulation and command-led. It is about dialogue and engagement: it's not just about talking, it's about listening too. Our narratives and messages must be coherent and consistent, credible and compelling. We have to be adaptive and agile, particularly if we want to compete in the 21st century information environment. Strategic communication has to be at the heart of everything that we do. Messages must be simple and believed in by those who have to deliver them. We need to empower our people - both military and civilian - so that they can engage and compete with those who are trying to oppose us. Of course this needs to be done with discipline, but we do need to delegate and trust our people more. All of this will take a change in mindset, and that requires leadership, training and education.

DF: What communication issues do we face when something like Libya occurs?

JL: With Libya, there was a series of factors that made strategic communication particularly challenging at the start. The government was relatively new; the MOD had been dealing with enduring operations for the last nine years or so, so our experience of 'crisis' was a bit rusty. We had to work out where we sat in relation to No 10, the FCO, the US, the French and NATO and everyone else. Coordination was vital but the right mechanisms were not in place. But we were determined to engage with the public via the media right from the start. The MOD began by providing a series of daily press briefings to inform people about what we were doing. We also promulgated situation reports to the press, and still do. Additionally, we conducted background briefings to defence commentators ('talking heads') to make them better informed, so that when they are asked to comment by the media they are able to explain the operational context.

DF: Was it annoying that the press seemed to forget all about Afghanistan at that time?

JL: It's understandable. However, we in MOD certainly did not forget about Afghanistan, even if the media did. We have continued throughout Operation ELLAMY to keep pushing out Op HERRICK updates, including bringing in commanders, such as Commander 16 Air Assault Brigade, to talk to the media. This is important; it is much more effective if we use theatre experts and commanders to deliver our messages - they speak with authority and credibility. We also conduct media briefings from theatre via VTC (Video Teleconferencing).

DF: How do you measure the success of a media briefing?

JL: Well, it's certainly not by column inches in the newspapers, or by the number of stories I get out of it, because, even if it's been a successful press conference, other events happening in the world may result in us receiving no coverage at all. However, it is about informing the defence correspondents and providing them background information, so that they

have a better understanding of what is happening in theatre, so that when they do write a piece, it is accurate and balanced. Therefore, if I don't get any stories, that's not a disaster. But I do keep an eye on who has attended the briefings and talk to them about what they get out of them. There is no shortage of great stories from all our operations: the challenge is how to use them as aids to deliver our key messages. For Afghanistan, we also have to get the balance right between stories about security operations and military personnel, and those about governance and economic development.

DF: What has the role taught you?

JL: Whilst engagement with the media is on a much better footing, we in the MOD have much further to go in terms of being fit for purpose for 21st century operations in strategic communication terms, particularly in IO and non-kinetic influence operations. We have loads of lessons learned from past and current operations; we now need to raise our game and move up a level in understanding and execution of strategic communication. In my view, this requires organisational changes in the MOD and a shift in mindset and process. **DF**

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THE ROYAL NAVY'S NEW
RESPONSE FORCE TASK
GROUP (RFTG) IS AT THE
HEART OF THE UK'S ABILITY
TO REACT AT SHORT
NOTICE TO UNFORESEEN
GLOBAL EVENTS



PREPARING FOR THE UNKNOWN



Global reach: A Royal Marine from 40 Commando conducts vertical assault training while deployed on Ex Cypriot Lion

The Cougar 11 deployment, as the RFTG's first and current deployment is being called, consists of numerous Royal Navy warships and auxiliary vessels, with embarked Royal Marines and helicopters.

After a series of exercises, the RFTG will be poised to respond to short-notice tasking across a diverse range of defence activities such as non-combatant evacuation operations, disaster relief, humanitarian aid or amphibious operations.

The RFTG concept was announced in last year's Strategic Defence and Security Review. It highlights the enduring need for the Armed Forces to plan and train for unforeseen events that may occur in parallel with the Defence main effort of current operations.

Commodore John Kingwell, Commander UK Task Group, said: "Consisting of ships, helicopters and Royal Marines held at high readiness, the Response Force Task Group enables the Royal Navy to respond at short notice to unforeseen events in an unpredictable and fast-moving world. Naval forces are ideally placed to respond to a range of missions central to UK defence and security."

The first major exercise the Task Force has been involved in is Exercise Cypriot Lion, a multinational exercise in the Mediterranean, which has combined air defence exercises and live firings out at sea with amphibious exercises in coastal waters involving Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade.

Following Cypriot Lion the Task Group will transit through the Suez Canal and conduct further exercises in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf. **DF**

RFTG SHIPS

- HMS Albion
- HMS Ocean
- HMS Sutherland
- RFA Cardigan Bay
- RFA Mounts Bay
- RFA Wave Knight
- RFA Fort Rosalie.

VN

Turn out for troops: scene from last year's Armed Forces Day in Cardiff



ARMED FORCES DAY

ARMED FORCES DAY 2011 IS ON 25 JUNE WITH EVENTS GOING ON ALL AROUND BRITAIN, WRITES LORRAINE MCBRIDE

Now in its third year, interest in Armed Forces Day has exploded, with crowds drawn by pageants, military bands and star names. With just weeks to go till this year's celebration of the UK's Armed Forces, preparations are in full swing to host a three-day event in Edinburgh, building on the success of previous years.

Edinburgh is gearing up to lay on the biggest ever Armed Forces Day with a parade, live music, exhibitions, aerial displays and a Royal Navy ship open to visitors. Events kick off in Leith on Friday 24 June, including tours of HMS *Portland*, and displays by the Red Arrows over the Firth of Forth, Royal Marine Commandos and a Royal Navy field gun team.

The following day (25 June), a parade of up to 1,500 troops, veterans and cadets will march down the Royal Mile from the Castle Esplanade to Holyrood Park. The parade will end with a short religious ceremony of thanks, known as a Drumhead Ceremony. Then it's the turn of Edinburgh Council to lay on a packed afternoon of family entertainment including military flypasts, bouncy castles, highland dancing, music, and a Veterans' Village. The day's free celebrations will end with a Beating Retreat, an ancient military tradition to mark the end of a ceremonial occasion. Among the

VIPs will be senior royalty - organisers are sworn to secrecy - but Gareth Legg, project manager for Armed Forces Day in Main Building, points out that the real stars are the Armed Forces. "The day is an opportunity for communities to say thank you," said Gareth.

"It's very much a celebration of the living as opposed to remembering the dead," he adds.

The celebrations are also aimed at a broad age range as Gareth explained, "We try to entertain everyone from nine to 90 including kids, squaddies and veterans."


Organisers will encourage reservists to wear their uniforms to work, while local businesses will offer special concessions to troops and veterans wearing veterans

badges. "The incentive is that you may get a cheap meal, or a few pounds off," said Gareth. Assembly packs are also rolled out across schools. Other events repeated this year include the All England Tennis Club recruiting stewards from troops who are invited into the royal box to take a bow. "If you're on centre court with Roger Federer looking on, it's quite a day," said Gareth.

The first Armed Forces Day was a low-key event at Chatham attended by 20,000 people. Last year, in Cardiff, crowds of 70,000 attended despite clashing with England's knockout in the World Cup, Glastonbury and Wimbledon. Organisers hope to surpass these numbers this year.

Even the recession isn't dampening enthusiasm, with cash-strapped councils queuing up to host events.

In its short life span Armed Forces Day has enlisted celebrity ambassadors and this year Barbara Windsor, Bruce Forsyth, Hugh Grant, Andy Murray and Lord Alan Sugar will lend support.

Towns and cities will mark Armed Forces Day from 18 June to 3 July. MOD is also harnessing the power of social media and has already signed up 820,000 Facebook friends. "Excitement has snowballed," said Gareth. "Everyone should get involved and enjoy the day." For more information, visit www.armedforcesday.org.uk 

Mini cadet: CDS General Sir David Richards meets a young supporter





His cup runneth over: Corporal Mark Ward shakes hands with Carlos Tevez

Picture: Football Association

SOLDIER MAKES HIS MARK AT WEMBLEY

CORPORAL MARK WARD HANDED OVER THE FA CUP TO MAN CITY SKIPPER CARLOS TEVEZ, WRITES LORRAINE MCBRIDE

IT IS not every day you meet a hero, but at the FA Cup final Corporal Mark Ward MC met a whole team brimming with idols when he presented the Cup to his boyhood team, Manchester City. In doing so, Corporal Ward joined a long line of distinguished names past and present including; Prince William, the Queen, Princess Diana, Bobby Robson and Winston Churchill, who have all presented the Cup.

"The atmosphere was electric," said Mark. "There were 88,000 fans and when they all cheered it was fantastic."

Mark, 27, who serves in the Mercian Regiment, admits that when his Second-in-Command called him into the office to ask if he fancied presenting the FA Cup at the final between Man City and Stoke City, it was a bolt from the blue. "At first, I thought he was winding me up," he said, adding, "I was over the moon."

Corporal Ward was the FA's guest of honour at the Wembley showpiece and represented the Armed Forces after being chosen by MOD for his inspirational leadership and selfless bravery as a section commander in Afghanistan, for which he has earned a Military Cross.

Before the match, he sat down for lunch with the FA Chairman and Prime Minister David Cameron, before joining the teams in the tunnel ahead of kick-off to wish them good luck. Mark said: "They were all brilliant but

Joe Hart is a bubbly character and came over for a good chat."

Other troops handpicked to carry out the FA Cup and medals were; Petty Officer Andy Gibbs, Royal Marine Scott Woods, Private Michael Swindells (1 Bn Mercian) and the RAF's Corporal Sarah Thomas and Senior Aircraftman Craig Richardson.

Talking after the match, Corporal Ward said: "I'm so proud to have done this on behalf of all our troops. Football is a massive part of army life. I've always been a big fan and also play in my battalion football team. When we are away on tour if there is ever a chance to watch a game we do. It's a welcome diversion from the day job. Getting awarded the Military Cross was an extremely proud moment in my life but I have to say this is up there."

Mark normally watches the final in a pub but reckons there is no substitute for Wembley's big match atmosphere. He has supported Man City since he was knee-high and had his first team strip as a toddler. Now, the die-hard Blues fan has the match ball to treasure and a programme signed by Fabio Capello, Trevor Brooking and Stuart Pearce.

Occasions for Man City to grace Wembley finals are rare beasts – the last outing was 30 years ago – and for Mark, presenting the FA Cup was a dream come true.

He said: "It was amazing and the whole experience was an unforgettable once-in-a-lifetime day." **DF**

SAH!

Boys' toys: WO1 Bill Mott is the new voice of iconic kids' figures

you 'orrible little man!

LONDON DISTRICT GARRISON SERGEANT MAJOR WO1 BILL MOTT IS THE NEW VOICE OF KIDS' ACTION FIGURES

INTERVIEW: LORRAINE MCBRIDE

A rmy Sergeant Majors are world-famous for bawling orders that can be heard a mile away. Now, Garrison Sergeant Major of London District, WO1 Bill Mott, has lent his ear-splitting parade square bark to the world of boys' action toys.

WO1 Bill Mott OBE joined the Army in 1979 and is a veteran of state occasions including Trooping the Colour, the Cenotaph, State Opening of Parliament and the Festival of Remembrance. During the recent Royal Wedding Bill trained and drilled troops in the royal guard of honour with military precision. Indeed, days after the wedding, Horse Guards was still abuzz.

"It was a wonderful day and there was definitely the camaraderie that all troops feel on days like that," said Bill.

He cites the royal wedding as a highlight in his long distinguished career,

but now he can add voice artist to his roll call of heady accomplishments.

When he got the call asking him to provide the voice for the army doll, Bill, who radiates a can-do army ethic, instantly said: "Not a problem!"

Recording took just one day with Bill squeezing into a tiny sound booth in Soho.

“ I bellowed: ‘Throw smoke - GRENADE!’ which forced the crew to whip off their headphones ... ”

"It was quite funny," he recalled. "They put me in a booth which was just like you see on telly. I sat in front of a mike and the sound engineer asked me to do a sound check. I asked if he wanted me to read

aloud and he advised: 'No, just shout like you would normally.'"

Taking them at their word, Bill bellowed: "Throw smoke - GRENADE!" which forced the crew to whip off their headphones, fearing for their eardrums. "I tried it again but lowered my volume," grinned Bill.

The 10-inch infantry figure comes kitted out with Anti Structure Munition (ASM), desert combat kit and combat boots, and its authentic army orders capture extraordinary attention to detail but Bill modestly brushes off praise, insisting that he was just being himself.

"I'd normally be shouting orders in a battlefield or on exercise so being in a sound booth was a bit odd, but it wasn't difficult."

So how realistic are the orders? Press his belly (the toy, not WO1 Mott) and the diminutive doll barks: "Take cover - contact!" accompanied by a crunch of army

boots. Press again, and he yells, "Cease firing, enemy withdrawing."

Later back in the office, one wag joked: "Hang on, if the toy doesn't moan, 'Cutbacks!' it can't be that realistic."

Back in the 60s/70s, Action Man was the mainstay of every boy's childhood with its replica gun and gripping rubber hands. As a boy, Bill treasured his own Action Man but never in his wildest dreams did he imagine that one day he would voice a modern-day doppelganger.

In 2009, the MOD spearheaded a revival of the toys by launching its own similar range, but were quick to emphasise that the HM Armed Forces toys, which is designed by the Character Group toy firm, has no connection with the original Action Man.

In the film world, voice actors are paid millions and regularly receive fan mail. For his part, Bill wasn't paid a bean but he is chuffed that a share of royalties is donated to army welfare projects.

Wild horses won't allow the Army's real life action man to gush just how much he secretly enjoyed his brush with fame, though Bill has already passed down his complimentary doll to his tiny grandson.

"I can't wait for him to get big enough to

Pictures: Harland Quarrington



COMBAT DOLL'S COMMANDS

- Take cover. Contact!
- Prepare ASM for firing!
- Throw smoke - GRENADE!
- Cease firing. Enemy withdrawing!
- [sounds of gunfire] Contact!
- Joint fire team, take cover. Delta fire team, follow me!
- Object secure - good work!

play with it but my son wanted it really!"

For toymakers, there can be no better role model than Bill Mott to front up their diminutive doll.

Bill hails from a trio of army-barmy brothers; John is a former Regimental Sergeant Major and Nick, a serving Major, who have all served Queen and Country.

Earlier this year, Nick was awarded the MBE and Bill plans to sneak into the Buckingham Palace investiture. "I'll heckle him and shout, 'Get your heels together!'" he smiled.

Turning back to the action figure perched on his desk, the down-to-earth army veteran dismisses any notion that he had to get into character.

"I've been an infantry soldier now for 33 years so getting into character happened a long time ago," he said. "I am still Garrison Sergeant Major of London District. There is no change and I won't be switching to any other mentality."

For a legendary soldier, WO1 Bill Mott, acting out the role of an infantryman must be child's play. **DF**

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A life-changing DEPLOYMENT

DEPLOYING ON OPERATIONS IS PAR FOR THE COURSE FOR THE MILITARY, BUT FOR CIVILIANS, IT IS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT BALL GAME. LEIGH HAMILTON REPORTS.

For some civil servants, deploying to an operational theatre can seem quite daunting. But leaving the safety of your office and your home comforts behind to spend time in a place like Afghanistan is usually a choice, rather than a requirement.

Jenna Clare is one of many MOD civil servants who have made that choice.

She was faced with the dilemma of making this difficult decision when she was asked to step in at short notice to cover for an ill colleague. But, she says, travelling to and working in Afghanistan was an experience that changed her life.

From January until May 2010, Jenna took up post as the policy advisor (POLAD) to the Brigadier commanding Headquarters Joint Force Support (Afghanistan) (HQ JFSp(A)) and was based in Camp Bastion for the duration.

POLADs are deployed MOD civil servants who work directly to the military commander of an operational headquarters and operate as part of the Command Group. The role is principally about ensuring that national policy takes proper account of the needs and views of the deployed commander

and that they are clear that they are operating within government policy.

As well as at HQ JFSp(A) in Bastion, POLADs are working in Afghanistan in support of Task Force Helmand's HQ in Lashkar Gah, Regional Command (South West) in Bastion, and at HQ International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul.

At JFSp(A), the HQ has a variety of roles including detention and dealing with contractors working for ISAF forces.

On arrival in Afghanistan, Jenna was unsure how she would be welcomed, but soon settled into her new surroundings.

"With the guys I was working with, they were all phenomenally bright and right on top of their game," she said. "Initially they were questioning who I was and what I was doing, but once I explained my role, they were fabulous.

"I made some really good friends. At the headquarters I was very much taken into the fold. With the military, as everyone moves around a lot, they are quick to form new groups and they are very welcoming to new members."

From working in a desk job at the MOD's Main Building in London, to the dusty heat in Afghanistan, the change in environment and pace certainly proved challenging for Jenna.

"It's given me a lot of confidence as you have to throw yourself in the deep end. The environment's pretty extreme, the job's pretty extreme, and you know that you might sink or you might swim - you just don't know."

Although challenging, the experience gave Jenna a sense of clarity.

"When you're working in defence, a lot of the time you're toiling away and there's a lot of you trying to work on a very small part of it and it's difficult to see the whole picture," she said. "Being on operations in theatre, you can see what the whole thing is for. The whole of the MOD suddenly makes sense. I've done various jobs in the MOD and some people question how they fit into the bigger picture, but when you're out there it all snaps into place."

Of course, civil servants do receive pre-deployment training before entering an operational theatre and everything is done to ensure they are



Pictures: Courtesy of Jenna Clare

“ When you go home, tell them about us and say ‘For your tomorrows, we gave our today’. It really gets to you on a personal level. ”

safe, but still, going outside the wire can be an exciting, albeit scary, prospect.

“It’s one of those things that afterwards you think ‘I should have been quite scared’, but at the time you’re just thinking ‘this is great!’” Jenna said. “If you work in the HQ, you are coordinating an awful lot of action, there’s a lot of stuff going on out there. You know all about it because you’re in the headquarters and running it, but you’re not seeing it. There’s all this stuff happening and you want to be part of it.

“Everyone I was working with would always be jealous when they heard someone was going outside the wire. You want to see where things are happening.”

The contrast of the excitement of being on the ground with the grim reality of being in a war zone struck a sombre tone with Jenna and she got a close-up view of the tragic side to operations.

“The helicopter landing pad for the hospital was right outside our headquarters, so if you heard a helicopter overhead that sounded like it was about to land on the roof, you knew that someone had just been killed or had been seriously injured.” She found the repatriation ceremonies particularly moving.

“Two or three thousand people would gather and hold a vigil outdoors at sunset and at every single one the Last Post was played and it used to get to me every time. Everyone would cry. At the end of every one, they’d say: “When you go home, tell them about us and say ‘For your tomorrows, we gave our today’. It really gets to you on a personal level.”

Overall, Jenna feels that her time in Afghanistan has changed her as a person.

“My experience in Afghanistan has definitely changed me. I now understand defence; I get it. It gives you a really good understanding about the way things work and what is important and what’s not.

“Most of all it’s one of those things, once the suntan has faded, you can tell your grandchildren that you went to Afghanistan. It’s something really different and not many people have done it. Fundamentally it’s about going out there and seeing what it’s like on the ground.” **DF**

For more information about civilians supporting military operations overseas, call Toni-Louise Worthington from the MOD Support to Operations team on 0207 218 2415, or email her on DGHRCS-S20-CommsMgr@mod.uk



Jenna with Afghan Ministers and Group Captain Gareth Thomas

Life-changing: Jenna's deployment had a big impact on her

KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF DIABETES

THE NUMBER OF BRITONS SUFFERING FROM DIABETES IS SOARING AND ON AVERAGE, THEY WAIT SEVEN YEARS UNTIL DIAGNOSIS OF THE CONDITION



By Nick Imm, a Naval Surgeon Commander in HM Naval Base, Faslane

This month I thought we'd talk about diabetes. Worldwide, around 200 million people have this problem including stars such as Halle Berry, Winnie Mandela, Randy Jackson and Sir Steve Redgrave.

The number of sufferers in the UK is soaring. In recent years there has been a 75 per cent increase in new cases. And there are many people not even aware they have this condition in which there is too much glucose (sugar) in the blood.

The amount of glucose is normally controlled by insulin, which is made by the pancreas. There are two types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 1 diabetes is the one you've probably heard of and is also known as insulin-dependent diabetes.

The body stops making insulin and patients need to use insulin injections. It's been discovered that in Type 1 diabetes some of the body's immune cells attack and damage the pancreas. This type usually develops more quickly and affects younger people but it can occur at any age.

Type 2 diabetes, or non-insulin-dependent diabetes, develops slowly and often people don't know they have it.

“It is important to treat diabetes as the condition increases your risk of other medical problems.”

Being overweight is a risk factor. The body still makes insulin but it's not as effective as it should be. It's thought that on average people have Type 2 diabetes for seven years before they're diagnosed. This type of diabetes is usually treated by a healthy diet or a combination of diet and tablets.

So, how would you know if you might have diabetes? The main symptoms are:


- Feeling very thirsty
- Having to pass water more often than usual, especially at night
- Feeling really tired
- Unexplained weight loss
- Recurrent fungal infections
- Blurred vision

It is important to treat diabetes as the condition increases your risk of other medical problems. For example, the chance of a man with Type 2 diabetes having coronary heart disease is roughly three times greater per year than the average chap.

Other problems caused by untreated diabetes include visual problems, kidney failure, strokes and impotence.

Eating sugary foods does not directly cause the condition – although eating too much of any food can lead to obesity which is strongly associated with diabetes.

If you have any of the symptoms listed above do visit your medic or GP. If diabetes is suspected, you will be asked to provide a urine sample and have a blood test.

Although diabetes can't be cured, it can be treated really successfully and the earlier it's diagnosed the better, since the risk of developing other medical problems is reduced. Stay healthy and I'll see you next month. 

■ This is general advice only. If you have any medical concerns please see your medic or GP.



PUTTING IN THE LEG WORK

HOW TO KEEP THE BONES, MUSCLES AND JOINTS OF OUR ARMS AND LEGS HEALTHY

AS WITH most of the body, diet and exercise play a crucial role in keeping limbs healthy.

Our bones, muscles and joints require the right combination of movement, food and blood flow to keep them strong and flexible.

The legs are made up of six major muscles and muscle groups. All of these must work in perfect harmony to be able to walk, point your foot, or straighten your knee. When these muscles are strong and conditioned they become firm, but let them get weak and the muscles sag.

Good muscle tone helps prevent 95 per cent of all varicose and spider veins.

It's important to keep your legs in shape as most exercise relies on leg movement. For example, when running, your calves lift the heel approximately 1,500 times per mile.

But bedridden patients with poorly legs before illness suffer deep vein thrombosis (DVT) up to twice as often as those with strong legs.

Exercising keeps blood circulating through the legs so physical activity is crucial.

Activities such as running

or walking will prevent any blood clots and reduce risks of developing any diseases connected with your vascular system or muscles. If you are standing up all day, compression socks or bands will ensure a free blood flow and prevent feet from swelling.

Try to keep your legs higher than your chest for at least half-an-hour a day. Soft, relaxing massages will also increase circulation as well as aiding relaxation, reducing stress. Also make sure your clothes and shoes don't obstruct blood flow; wear comfy clothes and shoes with flat soles.

Our arms also rely on good circulation. Studies show obesity may lead to poor circulation due to extra weight compressing veins and arteries.

Avoid substances that can constrict blood vessels such as too much caffeine, alcohol and nicotine. While garlic helps prevent the formation of plaque in blood vessels.

Exercise is key to building muscles, but try to enhance the benefits by consuming foods rich in vitamins, proteins and minerals.

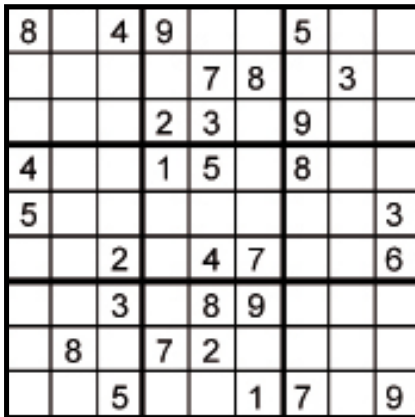


This article comes to you from CS Healthcare, the specialist provider of health insurance for civil servants. Telephone 0800 917 4325.

cshealthcare.co.uk



SUDOKU



Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

9	6	5	3	1	4	7	8	2
8	7	4	2	5	9	6	1	3
3	2	1	7	8	6	4	5	9
2	3	9	1	7	5	8	4	6
6	1	7	4	2	8	3	9	5
5	4	8	6	9	3	2	7	1
4	8	2	5	3	1	9	6	7
1	9	3	8	6	7	5	2	4
7	5	6	9	4	2	1	3	8

Solution to the May 2011 puzzle



■ Send in your Sudoku solution and you could win a Maglite torch. Our address is on page 4. For more info, visit www.maglite.com, and for nearest stockist details call Burton McCall on 0116 234 4644.

CHESS



Compiled by:
Carl Portman

Chess jokes are few and far between but here's a cracker that I simply have to share with you. Two old men played chess for years until one day one of them sadly died. The other was awoken in bed one night to hear his friend talking. "I have some good news and bad news for you my friend," he said. "It's wonderful here in chess heaven, you can meet and play all the old masters in any tournament you like. You can play against the likes of Fischer, Tal, Steinitz, Morphy and Lasker, it's just fantastic". "Oh that sounds marvellous," said his friend, "so what's the bad news?" "Aah" came the voice from above, "You've got black against Capablanca next Thursday!"

Talking of Capablanca, who in some people's eyes is the best chess player that ever lived, an opponent of his, Eugene Alexandrovich Znosko-Borovsky (such a resonant name if ever there was one) once published a monograph called 'Capablanca's mistakes'. In response, Capablanca told the author that he had tried to write a work called 'Znosko-Borovsky's Good Moves' but had to give



up as he couldn't find enough material. Now that's what I call oral checkmate!

Here's a lovely position from the game Najdorf - Redolfi Mar del Plata 1959. White is a pawn up and threatening to queen on g8. How is black going to proceed in light of this?

Send your answers to me at carl.portman282@mod.uk The first correct answer out of the hat wins a chess related prize.

The answer to May's problem is 1... Qxh2+! A spectacular queen sacrifice. 2. Nxh2 Re1+ 3. Nf1 Bh2+ 4. Kh1 Rxf1 checkmate. Winner to be announced.

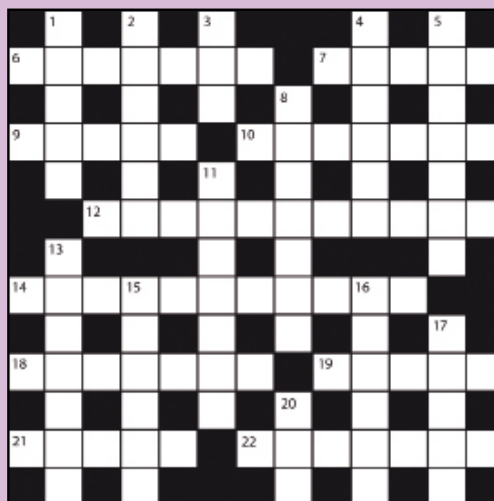
TOPICAL CROSSWORD

ACROSS

6. Formal speech (7)
7. Artificial bird used to entice game within shooting range (5)
9. 'Band Of Joy' is this singer's most recent studio album (5)
10. Entrepreneur associated with the Virgin brand (7)
12. And 21 Across. Venue for the Royal Wedding on April 29, 2011 (11,5)
14. Actor who is best known for 'Apocalypse Now' and 'The West Wing' (6,5)
18. Soft, light woollen fabric with a slight nap (7)
19. Larry, the star of the cult TV comedy 'Curb Your Enthusiasm' (5)
21. See 12 Across
22. See 2 Down

DOWN

1. This singer's album '21' has been the



- big hit of 2011 (5)
2. And 22 Across. April 29th was his wedding day (6,7)
3. Hillary Clinton is this country's Secretary of State (3)
4. Rafael Nadal is a leading figure in this sport (6)
5. High-ranking officer in the army (7)
8. Goods carried on a ship (7)

11. When he found David Livingstone, he said 'Dr Livingstone, I presume' (7)
13. Small kangaroo (7)
15. Bicycle made for two (6)
16. Electronic messages (6)
17. The San Siro is this city's football stadium (5)
20. This animal is a key character in the new musical 'Betty Blue Eyes' (3)

SOLUTION (NO PEEKING)

- Across**
6. Address 7. Decoy
 9. Plant 10. Branson
 12. Westminster
 14. Martin Sheen 18. Flannel
 19. David 21. Abbey
 22. William
- Down**
1. Adele 2. Prince
 3. USA 4. Tennis
 5. Colonel 8. Freight
 11. Stanley 13. Wallaby
 15. Tandem 16. Emails
 17. Milan 20. Pig



WIN SALOMON HIKING GEAR

There can't be an outdoor enthusiast out there who isn't familiar with, or indeed has owned, some Salomon footwear, whether for the mountain, the approach, the trail or the pub. But you might not be aware that Salomon also produces high tech, outdoor clothing. In fact, its hiking range is leading the trend for lighter, more breathable, more packable fabrics that move with the body. And here is your chance to own a great combo for the outdoors as two pairs of Salomon Comet 3D GTX boots (RRP £135) and two Salomon Mountain Crossing jackets (RRP £130) are up for grabs. They are lightweight and waterproof with an emphasis on performance,

fit and comfort. The boot is styled on Salomon's award-winning trail running shoes and packed with technology. The jacket features ClimaPro, a fabric which is waterproof and breathable, and is easily packable into a pack or bag. More details on the full ranges can be found at www.salomon.com

TO WIN

Answer the following question and send it with your name, postal address and phone number to dmc-newsdesk@mod.uk, with 'Salomon' in the subject line, by 30 June 2011. **Q. What geographical feature appears in the name of Salomon's new jacket?** Please state whether you would like men's or women's items and give your shoe and jacket sizes (S, M, L, XL).

WIN 2 LUXURIOUS NIGHTS IN LONDON

The Grand at Trafalgar Square

Located within the restored, historic landmark Northumberland House, and originally the luxury Victoria Hotel (1887), The Grand at Trafalgar Square boasts spectacular features including an original Italian marble entrance hall and elegant Gallery Lounge. Home to the Ministry of Defence for over 60 years and now beautifully restored, the hotel is designed with every modern comfort in mind. Many of the guestrooms have high ceilings, historic features and opulent windows and

all are state-of-the-art with luxury bedding, free fast internet access, iPod docks and thoughtful touches like complimentary chilled bottled water stations. Here is your chance to win a two-night stay for two people, including a leisurely breakfast in Boyd's Bar & Brasserie. There will be plenty of opportunities for sightseeing and shopping. Trafalgar Square is at the very centre of London and The Grand is steps away from Nelson's Column, the National Gallery and Covent Garden. While Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace and many other popular London attractions, as well as London's Theatreland, are just a short stroll



away. This offer also includes an intimate dinner for two in Boyd's, the perfect place to unwind, relax and indulge in delicious fine food and carefully selected wines.

TO WIN

just email your name, address and telephone number to dmc-newsdesk@mod.uk by 30 June 2011. Include 'The Grand, Trafalgar Square' in the subject line.





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Today's schoolchildren, of course. That's why
Boeing and the Royal Aeronautical Society
created the 'Schools Build a Plane Challenge'
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inspiring ever more young engineers of the
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Discover more at boeing.co.uk/together

